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Everybody in This House
First Printing, 2008
Second Printing, 2010
Printed in U.S.A.

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MAN MEASURES MAN

by David Robson

4 Males, 2 Females

Synopsis: In the waning days of the Kosovo conflict, two American doctors travel to Macedonia to offer their services to Albanian refugees. Into the chaos of the medical camp, a mysterious boy arrives, forcing the doctors to re-examine their actions and the personal ethics that guide them.

TERMINUS AMERICANA

by Matt Pelfrey

5 Males, 3 Females with double casting

Synopsis: After barely surviving an office rampage, Mac Winchell is thrust into a nightmare landscape populated by lost Marlboro Men, psychotic vagabonds, sinister corporate thugs and a strange cult known as a “The Church of Christ, Office Shooter”. Mac attempts to escape this twisted reality by undertaking a quest that ultimately leads him into the darkest corners of the American Dream. Terminus Americana is a surreal, visceral and challenging examination of our violence-saturated culture.

Everybody in This House

SCENE 1

FRIDAY NIGHT, TEN P.M. THE STAGE IS DARK. A SPOTLIGHT FADES UP ON MARY TURNER. SHE IS FRAGILE AND DISHEVELED. SHE COVERS HERSELF IN A RED SHAWL. STANDING DOWNSTAGE CENTER, FACING THE AUDIENCE, SHE IS VISITING FATHER O'DONNELL. HE IS A BOOMING VOICE WITHOUT A FACE.

MARY: I hope I wasn't interrupting anything Father. Thank you for seeing me so late.

FATHER: No problem at all. You seemed quite upset on the phone.

MARY: I feel ridiculous calling you over nothing.

FATHER: Well it didn't seem like nothing.

MARY: I haven't been feeling very well lately... You know how it is.

FATHER: With the kids, yes. Motherhood is a difficult job, isn't it?

MARY: I guess you could say that. I'm not really clear on anything.

FATHER: Things frequently become clearer when you talk about them.

MARY: I know...

FATHER: Everyone has problems... Yours, while being difficult, are not unique.

(PAUSE)

MARY: You're right Father. I guess they're not. (PAUSE) It's about the kids... I um, I... (SIGHS) I don't feel like a mother anymore. (LAUGHS) That sounds crazy, doesn't it? (SILENCE) I don't have any control over anything anymore... Things could go on without me.

FATHER: Could you be more specific?

MARY: I'm not a part of anything anymore... I don't feel like... If I wasn't there... (CATCHING HERSELF) I'm sorry... I know I shouldn't be thinking like that... John always says, what goes on in a house should stay in a house. That's why rooms have walls, right?

FATHER: I suppose ceilings are to keep God out?

MARY: No, ceilings are for hanging... things. For protection.

FATHER: (IMPATIENT) What's your point, Mary?

MARY: (LAUGHING) I don't know... I'm sorry Father. I shouldn't have come here... I'm not thinking right anymore. (DEEP PAUSE) John and I get into these fights. Arguments. It's not a problem, a serious one. I mean, I don't take them seriously... (SIGHS) I just want it to end.

FATHER: Your marriage? You know how the church feels about divorce. What are you looking for, my blessing?

MARY: Safety. Someone to tell me it's all going to be alright... Father, I'm a good Catholic. I go to church on Sunday mornings with the kids, we go to confession and they go to school here. Doesn't that count for anything?

FATHER: I can't advocate separation until you've exhausted all means of reconciliation... Have you spoken to him about counseling?

MARY: Father, you don't understand... It's past the point of counseling. Everything is.

FATHER: Nonsense. What's the problem? Does he have a bad temper?
(PAUSE)

MARY: He says hateful things and then apologizes, but that's not the point---

FATHER: And do you provoke him?
(PAUSE)

MARY: I don't think so---

FATHER: Perhaps you need to take a look at your own behavior. What is your part in the relationship? If neither of you has spoken about your grievances to the other, then how can you expect change?

MARY: I don't know---

FATHER: And what about your children? Why should you deprive them of a Father?
(PAUSE)

MARY: I don't... I don't know.

FATHER: A woman who leaves a man causes that man to look elsewhere hence causing adultery.

MARY: I can't be with a man who despises me! He won't let me leave the house... He thinks I'm having an affair!

FATHER: And what are you doing to cause him to think that? Are you trying to make him jealous?

MARY: No! He tells the kids I'm a whore! (REGAINING CONTROL) I'm sorry Father.

FATHER: You must always try to be compassionate. Obviously he didn't mean it. I'm sure he was only upset. If you figured out what your part in the relationship is, how you have contributed to the discord, then maybe he will change as well.

MARY: I've tried everything.

FATHER: And you have taken vows, for better or worse. In sickness and in health. I think there are other courses of action to take that would be more acceptable... To yourself and to God.

MARY: Yes Father.

FATHER: I will open the church for you so that you can meditate on your situation. Remember Mary, anger only hurts you. Forgiveness makes you a stronger person in the eyes of the Lord. I will look past much of what has been said here.

MARY: Thank you Father.

FATHER: There is no sin that is too great that cannot be forgiven in the eyes of the Lord. Even murderers on death row can be forgiven, if they confess and repent. I'm sure if you tried to be a better person, then John will as well.

MARY: Yes Father.

FATHER: Follow me. I will open the doors for you.

SPOTLIGHT FADES.

SCENE 2

SATURDAY MORNING, 3AM. ALL IS QUIET AND DARK, EXCEPT FOR THE KITCHEN NIGHTLIGHT. JOHN TURNER ENTERS LOUDLY THROUGH THE BACK DOOR IN THE KITCHEN. HE IS BEYOND DRUNK. BY THIS TIME, HE IS COHERENTLY INSANE. HE FLIPS ON A LIGHT. HE CROSSES TO THE REFRIGERATOR FOR A SANDWICH. JOHN THROWS THE BREAD ON THE COUNTER AND THEN A JAR OF PEANUT BUTTER. IT DOESN'T WORK. IT FALLS AND SHATTERS ON THE FLOOR.

JOHN: Goddamn it!

(HE STOOPS TO PICK IT UP, MAKING EVEN MORE NOISE. MARY ENTERS SQUINTING, SNUGGLED IN HER BATHROBE.)

MARY: John?

JOHN: Fuckin—

MARY: (HARSH WHISPER) What are you doing?

JOHN: (LOUD) What does it look like?

MARY: Sssshhhhh! You'll wake the kids up!

JOHN: Don't sssshhhh me! This is my goddamn house!

MARY: And you have children upstairs! (PAUSE, TRYING A DIFFERENT TACT) Do you need help?

JOHN: Not from you.

MARY: I didn't think you were ever coming back.

JOHN: Does it matter?

MARY: Should it?

JOHN: You have to ask?
(PAUSE)

MARY: I'm sorry--- (PROUDLY) I made a check out for the electric bill for you.

JOHN: (SARCASTICALLY) Oh how sweet... Didn't you think I'd do it?

MARY: Well you---

JOHN: I'm supposed to worry about the money here... I make the money---

MARY: I know you do---

JOHN: I balance the checkbook, I write out the checks because you fuck it up every time! I write the checks and you bounce them!

MARY: For Chrissake! I bounced one once and you never let me forget it!

JOHN: (SNEERING) Quiet! You've got children upstairs! (PICKS UP GLASS) Jesus! Get off my back! All I am here is your goddamn slave. I just bring the money in, right? That's all I'm good for. You're the stupid baby machine. Can you imagine how much money I'd save if I didn't have kids to support? How'd I get myself into something like that? Huh? I mean, what'd I do, stick it in ya a few times? (CUTS HIMSELF WITH GLASS) Shit!

MARY: No. Actually, you stuck it to me a few more times than that.

JOHN: Me and who else?
(PAUSE)

MARY: Sorry, I don't want to fight.

JOHN: You and your sorries! (LAUGHS) The Virgin Mary... Sorry, sorry, sorry. Must have quite a guilty conscience.

MARY: Insane...

JOHN: Immaculate fucking conception...

MARY: You're crazy in the head...

JOHN: Such a good Christian woman.

MARY: I'm not buying into your shit again. You'll have to argue with yourself.

JOHN: Oh come on Mary... Do I disgust you? I'm not such a disgusting person. (HE GRABS HER AT THE WAIST.)

MARY: Stop it!

JOHN: Stop it? Well... If ya ain't getting it from me, where is it coming from? Denny boy? (CALLS OUT) Dennis!

MARY: You pig!

JOHN: The girls? Which one of them is the bastard? (YELLING) Everybody up! GET THE FUCK UP!

MARY: John! Stop it!

JOHN: Get down here or I'm coming up!

MARY: What are you gonna do this time, kill 'em?

JOHN: (CALMLY) No. I'll just beat them with my fists. Make sure they never walk again.

(DENNIS ENTERS. HE HAS PAJAMAS AND A ROBE ON.)

DENNIS: (HALF AWAKE) Papa, can't we just sleep this time?

MARY: Crazy bastard!

DENNIS: Please?

JOHN: (YELLING UPSTAIRS) I'm giving you five to get down here!

MARY: John!

JOHN: That's it! I'm coming up!

(HE EXITS, YELLING AND CONFUSION ARE HEARD OFF-STAGE.)

MARY: Dennis! Go stop him!

(DENNIS EXITS TOO. MORE YELLING, BANGING AND CRASHING. DENNIS, TERRY, NINA AND PAPA ENTER. TERRY WEARS A BUTTON-DOWN NIGHTIE AND NINA WEARS A T-SHIRT AS WELL.)

JOHN: Alright!

(THEY LINE UP. ALL ARE WIDE AWAKE NOW.)

MARY: (TO THE KIDS) Go back to bed.

JOHN: Shuttup! (TO DENNIS) You! Are you my son?

DENNIS: Yes Papa.

JOHN: You would never betray me, would you?

DENNIS: Never Papa.
(PAUSE)

JOHN: Has your Mother done anything to you?

DENNIS: Huh?

JOHN: Has your Mother ever fucked you!

DENNIS: No!

JOHN: And have you ever wanted--

DENNIS: No!

(HE BEGINS TO CIRCLE AROUND DENNIS.)

JOHN: You know what to do. *(DENNIS PULLS HIS PANTS DOWN, EXPOSING HIMSELF.)* Huh! Well, what do you know... Still the same as ever. Well, if your Mama won't have me she certainly wouldn't have you.

MARY: Of course not.

(PAUSING. HE LOOKS AT MARY AND THEN CONTINUES.)

JOHN: Theresa!

TERRY: Yes Papa.

JOHN: Show me.

TERRY: *(PLAYING DUMB)* Show you what?

JOHN: That you're mine.

MARY: God...

JOHN: Are you my daughter?

TERRY: Yes.

JOHN: Prove it.

TERRY: I, I... I have your cheekbones... And your hair-- *(HE YANKS HER HAIR.)* Oooow! *(SHE UNBUTTONS HER NIGHTIE.)* If you were a woman... You'd look like me. *(HE PULLS HER HAIR BACK AND KISSES HER. MARY GASPS.)*

JOHN: *(TO MARY)* Just like you used to. *(TURNS TO NINA)* Your turn.

NINA: Not my turn.

JOHN: Show me.

NINA: Show you what?

JOHN: That you're mine.

NINA: No.

JOHN: Show me.

NINA: I don't wanna.

JOHN: You have to.

NINA: Mama---

MARY: She's just as much yours as the others.

JOHN: What are you hiding?

NINA: Nothing!

JOHN: So it's you, huh? You're not my daughter!

NINA: Not when you don't act like a Papa!

MARY: Leave her alone!

JOHN: You're hiding your Mama's sin. You are a living symbol of your Mother's sin!

NINA: I doubt Mama sinned. You just need an excuse!
(HE HITS HER. SHE FALLS TO THE FLOOR.) You drunk!

TERRY: Papa, stop it!

JOHN: A drunk! You wanna see how drunk I am! (HE GRABS A ROPE AND TIES HER LEG TO THE TABLE LEG.)

TERRY: Mama!

MARY: John! I swear to God I will---

JOHN: What are you gonna do about it? (TO NINA) Hear that, Mary Margaret? Your Mama can't do a damn thing. And neither can you... Look at you. Mama's girl. You look like her, you act like her. Mary Margaret. You even have her goddamn name. For Christ's sake, how stupid have I been!

(NINA BEGINS TO CRY.)

DENNIS: Papa, take it easy...

JOHN: I thought you were my son.

DENNIS: I am.

MARY: You leave her alone!

(HE GRABS THE BOTTLE. SHE LUNGES FORWARD. THEY GRAPPLE AND THE BOTTLE BREAKS. JOHN THROWS HER ON THE GROUND. SHE HITS THE FLOOR AND DOESN'T GET BACK UP.)

JOHN: See that children? There is impure blood here. I'm wastin' my money on some bastard kid. I'm gonna purify this house right now, would you like to join me?

TERRY: Papa, no!

JOHN: How can you defend someone who isn't even your sister?

NINA: Hail Mary, full of grace...

JOHN: Shuttup!

DENNIS: Papa, I'm sure if you thought this through...

JOHN: What are ya, some sissy? A boy is only as good a man as his Father teaches him to be... Our first lesson Dennis...

NINA: (CRYING) Help me God!

JOHN: God isn't going to help you. (PAUSE) Who catches the fish Dennis?

DENNIS: You do.

JOHN: Who cleans 'em?

DENNIS: Terry does.

JOHN: Who guts 'em?
(PAUSE)

DENNIS: (QUIETLY) I do.

JOHN: Are you my son Dennis?

DENNIS: (ON THE VERGE OF TEARS) Yes.

JOHN: (HOLDING THE BOTTLE) Then gut it.

NINA PUTS HER HEAD DOWN AND CRIES WHILE TERRY LOOKS ON, FROZEN AND HORRIFIED. DENNIS GRABS THE NECK OF THE BROKEN BOTTLE AND SLOWLY LOOKS AT NINA.

LIGHTS FADE.

SCENE 3

GOOD FRIDAY, TWO WEEKS LATER. SIX PM. NINA SITS ON A COUCH IN THE LIVING ROOM, IN A CATATONIC STATE. SHE IS BUNDLED IN QUILTS AND HER EYES ARE GLASSY. ALTHOUGH IT'S NOT TURNED ON, SHE STARES AT THE TV SET LIKE SHE'S ACTUALLY WATCHING IT. IN A WHIRLWIND, TERRY ENTERS THE ROOM, CLEANING COMPUSIVELY. SHE MAKES HER WAY TO THE COUCH, DUSTING UP A STORM. TERRY GRABS THE REMOTE CONTROL AND TURNS THE TV ON. SITCOM LAUGHTER IS HEARD. THIS BREAKS NINA'S SPELL. SHE LAYS HER HEAD ON THE PILLOW. TERRY CONTINUES TO DUST WHILE DENNIS ENTERS FROM THE KITCHEN.

DENNIS: Hey Terr, if a tree falls and nobody's around to see it, does that mean that is still fell?

TERRY: They were talking about it on the tube last night---

(THE DOORBELL RINGS. THEY FREEZE.)

DENNIS: Oh shit.

TERRY: Who do you think it is?

DENNIS: I dunno.

(WITHOUT THINKING, SHE WALKS TO THE DOOR AND LOOKS OUT THE WINDOW, PANICKED.)

TERRY: (QUIETLY) Oh no.

DENNIS: Who is it?

TERRY: Sssshhhh!

DENNIS: Don't sssshhhh me! Who is it? (SHE TURNS TO THE TV SET AND SHUTS IT OFF. NINA PERKS UP AGAIN AND WATCHES THE BLANK TV SCREEN.) Terry! (ANOTHER RING. SHE STOPS.) Who is it!

TERRY: (HISSING) Who do you think?

DENNIS: Oh.

TERRY: I do not want to see him.

DENNIS: No reason to freak. Pretend we're not here and he'll go away.
(RINGS AGAIN)

TERRY: What if Papa wakes up?

NINA: Who is it Terry?

TERRY: Nevermind Nina... What are we gonna do? (KNOCKING)
He ain't goin' away Dennis.

DENNIS: Do you think you can get rid of him?

TERRY: Can you?

(PAUSE)

DENNIS: Think he knows anything?

TERRY: If we play it real cool, he'll go away.

(PAUSE)

DENNIS: Let him in.

(TERRY GOES FOR THE DOOR AND THEN STOPS.)

TERRY: Nobody talks. (OPENING THE DOOR) Hello Father.

(DENNIS WALKS UP FROM BEHIND. NINA CONTINUES TO STARE AT THE TV.)

DENNIS: Father... What a surprise... A pleasant surprise. Come in.

(FATHER O'DONNELL WALKS THROUGH THE DOOR, UNSURE BUT STEADY.)

FATHER: Dennis... Theresa... Mary Margaret... (DENNIS AND TERRY WINCE AT THE NAME.) May I speak to your Father?

DENNIS: Sorry. He's not feeling very good today. He can't see anybody.

TERRY: You should probably come back.

DENNIS: What do you wanna talk to him about? Maybe I can help you.

FATHER: I don't think you can. I really need to speak to your Father directly.

TERRY: You know, Papa's takin' everything a bit hard... I'm sure you understand.

FATHER: Of course, and that's one of the reasons I'd like to speak with him.

DENNIS: One of the reasons?

TERRY: We'll be back in school soon.

DENNIS: We're just trying to recover...

FATHER: Yes, well... I understand how hard it must be---

TERRY: No, you don't.

FATHER: (PAUSING) No, you're right... I don't... I don't... But I would like to remind everyone that I am available if you would like to talk---

DENNIS: We did all our talkin' at the funeral, thank you.

FATHER: But Mary Margaret didn't... You know, in times like this it's best not to isolate...

DENNIS: We're not...

FATHER: The counselors at school can be very helpful---

TERRY: What are they gonna tell me?

DENNIS: I can't believe you came here to talk about school. School is the last thing on our minds... I mean, my God, there are some things that are more important than school Father.

TERRY: No offense---

FATHER: None taken.

DENNIS: You know... You'd think you'd try to give us more time. Especially Papa.

TERRY: He's not in a good mood right now. It probably would put him in a bad mood for the rest of the night... And that would be pretty bad for us.

DENNIS: If you need to talk to him that much... I can give him a message.
(PAUSE)

FATHER: (LOOKING AT DENNIS) You know. It's funny. I tried calling here for the past two days... Must have been about four times and each time it sounded like somebody picked up the phone and then hung it up. Isn't that strange?

DENNIS: (MOCK SERIOUSNESS) Gee Terr, we really oughtta get that checked out.

(TERRY HIDES HER SMILE.)

FATHER: (PAUSES, THEN LOOKS TO NINA) How are you doing? (LOOKS BACK AT DENNIS) I think I'll stick around anyway... It's very important I talk to him. Today. I guess we can call it... Official business. Very official business. You wouldn't want to interfere with official business, would you? (HE LOOKS STERNLY AT DENNIS, WHO BACKS OFF.) I think I'll wait right here for him. Right next to Mary Margaret.

DENNIS: Her name is Nina. (NINA SMILES SHYLY AT FATHER.) It's going to be a very long wait Father... Very long... Fine then, we'll just pretend you're not here. (TERRY AND DENNIS SIT DOWN. THEY ALL WATCH THE BLANK TV SET. SECONDS LATER, TERRY AND DENNIS CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE.) Don't you have someplace to go? I can't believe this! (A FEW MORE SECONDS OF SILENCE. TERRY CAN BARELY KEEP FROM CLEANING.) God! I can't take this! Priest from hell! (HE STORMS OUT. TERRY FOLLOWS HIM.)

TERRY: Dennis! (SHE STOPS BEFORE SHE EXITS, AND THEN TURNS TO NINA.) Nina!

(SHE EXITS.)

FATHER: Seems like your brother's a little upset with me. (SHE STARES AT HIM.) Why? (SHE CONTINUES TO STARE.) Can you go get your Father for me? (NINA NODS HER HEAD NO.) I hadn't planned on being here all day, you know. This is Good Friday. (NINA NODS.) I've got confessions to hear. I don't think your brother and sister would like to deprive people of a sacrament... That's pretty selfish. Not to mention a mortal sin.

NINA: Uh-huh.

FATHER: Mary Margaret. (HE GOES TO SAY SOMETHING AND THEN CHANGES HIS MIND.) He is upstairs, right?

NINA: Uh-huh.

FATHER: And you can't get him for me?

NINA: It's not allowed.

FATHER: Alright.

NINA: I wish I could.

FATHER: I know.

NINA: I'm sorry.

FATHER: Okay.

NINA: I don't want anybody to sin.

FATHER: Of course.

NINA: Bad things happen when you wake him up.

FATHER: Like what?

NINA: Nothing... I don't mean to upset your plans. I'm sorry.
(PAUSE)

FATHER: I'm sure you heard that Miss Stewart is leaving....

NINA: Uh-huh...

FATHER: Getting married... It's a nice thing, people in love.

NINA: I don't think so.

FATHER: Of course it is.

NINA: Maybe it would be okay, if somebody really loved you, no matter what... But that doesn't happen too often, does it?

FATHER: Not often enough.

NINA: I can't wait until somebody loves me no matter what.

FATHER: God does.

NINA: Mama did.

TERRY (O.S.): Nina!

NINA: (TO HERSELF) Sorry.

LIGHTS FADE.

SCENE 4

IN THE KITCHEN, DENNIS IS AT THE TABLE WHILE TERRY PACES AROUND.

DENNIS: When is that man leaving?

TERRY: Whenever he feels like it...

DENNIS: She's talking to him, isn't she? Son of a bitch! This is so unfair! He's just trying to make me feel guilty.

TERRY: Maybe he'll leave soon.

DENNIS: What does he want!

(SHE BEGINS TO SCOUR THE COUNTERTOPS.)

TERRY: (BABBLING) I don't know... Probably something to do with the funeral stuff. Something like that. Maybe there's some ritual he forgot to do or something like that, something he forgot to do. I might have read that somewhere once, but I can't remember where.

DENNIS: Did you hear him calling her Mary? Her name isn't Mary, it's Nina. And then he stared at me.

TERRY: If you just act normally, he'll go away.

DENNIS: I mean, I should be able to handle anything. You would think he'd respect that.

TERRY: (JOKING) Gee Denn, he probably didn't notice you became a man.

(DENNIS STARES AT TERRY. HE WALKS UP FROM BEHIND AND GRABS HER ON THE CROTCH, TAKING HER BY SURPRISE.)

DENNIS: Gainin' a little weight, huh Terr?

TERRY: (PAUSING, SCARED) That's what happens when a woman gets her period. But I guess you wouldn't know that seein' you just got your manhood.

(SHE SHOVES HIS HAND OFF.)

DENNIS: (YELLS) Why are you bein' a bitch---

TERRY: Why are you bein' like Papa?

(LIGHTS SNAP OFF IN THE KITCHEN AND UP IN THE LIVING ROOM. NINA CONTINUES TO WATCH THE BLANK TV WHILE FATHER WAITS.)

FATHER: Why don't you turn the tv on?

(HE GRABS THE REMOTE CONTROL, TURNING IT ON. HER SPELL IS BROKEN.)

NINA: Would you like something to drink?

FATHER: That would be nice. What do you have?

NINA: Scotch, Irish Coffee, Beer...

FATHER: Do you have anything else? Juice?

NINA: No.

FATHER: Soda?

NINA: No.

FATHER: Tea?

NINA: Water.

FATHER: Water?

NINA: On the rocks?

FATHER: With ice... Yes.

(TERRY ENTERS. SHE BEGINS TO DUST.)

NINA: Terry? I'm thirsty.

TERRY: (TO NINA, GIVING FATHER A DIRTY LOOK.) Drink?

NINA: Yes please. Water. On the rocks.

TERRY: For you?

NINA: Yes.

TERRY: On the rocks. Comin' up.

(SHE EXITS.)

FATHER: You get along well with your sister.

NINA: She takes care of me now.

FATHER: That must be... nice.

NINA: She tries.

FATHER: It must be hard for you.

NINA: It's hard for everybody.

FATHER: Being a young woman... You need a role model. Maybe when you come back to school one of the sisters could pair you up with somebody.

(TERRY ENTERS WITH A GLASS OF WATER. SHE TAKES A BIG GULP OF IT BEFORE GIVING IT TO NINA.)

TERRY: Here you go.

(NINA GENTLY SLIDES IT OVER TO FATHER SO THAT TERRY DOESN'T REALIZE IT.)

FATHER: I was just telling Mary Margaret---

TERRY: Nina! Her name is Nina!

FATHER: Nina... That I can probably work something out with some of the women at school. We can pair you up with someone---

TERRY: I don't think so.

FATHER: I thought it would be important for you girls to have a good role model, somebody you could talk to---

TERRY: Oh pleaaaaasssseeeee! I don't need to talk to anybody, and I don't need a role model. What are some nuns gonna teach me?

FATHER: It doesn't have to be a nun.

TERRY: What? What are we gonna do? We're gonna run around and I'm gonna have to wear print dresses and go to church functions... Mama did that and she hung herself, doesn't that tell you something?

FATHER: Like?

TERRY: Like.

FATHER: As in? Church and suicide go hand in hand?

TERRY: Well... You would know that better than I.

(DENNIS ENTERS, DRINKING BEER.)

DENNIS: Haven't bored you yet, huh Father?

FATHER: (STARING AT TERRY) Hardly... Is your Father going to be awake soon?

DENNIS: Probably not... Although he may come down to use the bathroom... But I will remind you again. You can always talk to me.

FATHER: Oh?

DENNIS: Haven't you ever heard of the term, second in command?

FATHER: And what are you in command of?

TERRY: Ah... Now there's a question---

DENNIS: This land...

TERRY: Take a look around you Dennis. The troops have deserted.

DENNIS: Deserted? Nobody's deserted. Now we got a chaplain in the ranks.

FATHER: Is that beer?

TERRY: Play along Father. I do.

DENNIS: You've been drafted.

FATHER: I'm not in anybody's army.

TERRY: He has to live out these male fantasies of his.

DENNIS: I'm the three star, Papa's the four star, you're the chaplain and Terry's the nursemaid or whatever they're called.

TERRY: And uh, what does that make Nina?

DENNIS: The Arab or the Chink... Depending on the war we're in. Today I say she is... Um... Oh, I don't know.

TERRY: No please. Do tell...

DENNIS: Oh, I dunno. What's our agenda today? I think she wouldda made a great commie but that's over now so I dunno. I guess we'll just have to leave her a girl for today.

TERRY: Oh come on Dennis! That's pretty lame. How about a P.O.W.?

DENNIS: Alright! Sure. A P.O.W. Here's to the P.O.W. (HE RAISES HIS GLASS.) And if she isn't careful, we'll make her an M.I.A.

HE LAUGHS AT HIS OWN JOKE AND FALLS BACK INTO A CHAIR. EVERYBODY WATCHES HIM. NOISES BEGIN TO BE HEARD OFFSTAGE, AS IF SOMEBODY IS ROAMING THE BACK HALLWAY. THE NOISES GET CLOSER. NINA BUNDLES HERSELF IN HER BLANKETS, COVERING HER HEAD. TERRY EXITS TO THE KITCHEN. DENNIS STOPS LAUGHING. AS THE NOISES GET LOUDER, FATHER STANDS ALONE, WATCHING EVERYONE REACT.

LIGHTS FADE.

SCENE 5

THE KITCHEN. TERRY PREPARES A DRINK. FATHER ENTERS.

FATHER: What's going on?

TERRY: What do you think?

FATHER: I don't know.

JOHN (O.S.): Where the hell is everybody?!

TERRY: Now you know.

FATHER: Your Father's awake?

TERRY: That's obvious. (SHE CONTINUES TO RUSH AROUND THE KITCHEN, MAKING A DRINK. FATHER STANDS THERE, NOT KNOWING WHAT TO DO.) Now isn't the time to talk if you know what I mean. He gets pretty upset if he's not set up.

FATHER: He sounds pretty upset now.

TERRY: No, he's like that normally.

FATHER: He is?

TERRY: Yeah. But you wouldn't know that... I guess you never really know, do you?

FATHER: Well... You like to think you do.

TERRY: Especially when you really do.
(SHE EXITS SMILING, LEAVING HIM ALONE. HE PAUSES, THEN FOLLOWS HER. LIGHTS RISE ON THE LIVING ROOM. TERRY ENTERS, RUSHING AROUND. NINA IS IN THE SAME POSITION AS BEFORE. SO IS DENNIS. JOHN IS SITTING NEXT TO DENNIS. HE IS UNPREPARED FOR GUESTS. GETTING OVER A HANG-OVER, HE WEARS A RATTY WHITE T-SHIRT AND PANTS. FATHER IS IN THE BACKGROUND. JOHN DOESN'T SEE HIM. TERRY HANDS HIM A DRINK.)

Not now Father. *(JOHN GULPS THE DRINK.)* Uh, Papa? Father O'Donnell would like to speak to you.

JOHN: Tell him I'll call him back.

TERRY: I think you can tell him yourself.

(JOHN LOOKS UP AND SEES FATHER. HE IS SHOCKED.)

FATHER: I'm sorry. I didn't mean to intrude.

JOHN: *(SWEETLY)*: Oh... You're not. Not at all. Please sit. *(TO DENNIS)* Dennis? Why didn't you tell me about Father O'Donnell being here?

DENNIS: I don't know. We didn't think it was important. *(AT TERRY)* Terry let him in.

JOHN: Theresa?

TERRY: I'm sorry. I told him it would be best if he came back but he didn't want to... *(AT DENNIS)* And Dennis thought he could handle it.